DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 329 524 SP 032 914

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TITLE Education Reform in Missouri and the Effect on Minorities Entering Teacher Education Programs.
PUB DATE 14 Jan 91
NOTE 13p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference on Recruitment and Retention of Minorities in Education (5th, Lexington, KY, January 14, 1991).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Career Choice; *College School Cooperation; Elementary Secondary Education; Graduate Study; Higher Education; *Minority Group Teachers; Preservice Teacher Education; *Scholarships; *State Federal Aid; Teacher Education Programs; *Teacher Recruitment
IDENTIFIERS *University of Missouri Columbia

ABSTRACT

Descriptions are given of three programs at the University of Missouri-Columbia which were implemented to recruit talented minority students into a career of teaching. The first of these, the Brooks Scholarships, are basically "full-ride" scholarships which provide a $3,000 scholarship renewable for 4 years. Two-thirds of the funding is provided by the state. Another is the EDUCARE program, a 6-week summer experience for minority students who have expressed interest in graduate study and a career as a professional educator. The program's objectives are to: provide selected minority students with an opportunity to participate in research and scholarly activities, introduce students to opportunities for graduate study, acquaint them with procedures for applying and securing financial aid, and help in planning for a career in professional education. The program is funded jointly by the university and the U.S. Department of Education. The third program, the Minority Intern Program, is a collaborative effort between the university and elementary and secondary schools. The program provides college students with opportunities to observe and work with professional educators in and out of the classroom. Internships are for one semester with opportunity for renewal and include a $1,500 stipend for each full semester the intern is enrolled in the program. (JD)

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ED 329524

# Education Reform in Missouri and the Effect on Minorities Entering Teacher Education Programs

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Running head: REFORM IN MISSOURI

According to a report of the American Council on Education and the Education Commission of the States (Collision, 1988, p. A20), the future prosperity of the nation will be jeopardized if the United States does not renew its commitment to minority group advancement. The report, One Third of a Nation, notes:

1. Forty-two percent of all the public school students by the year 2000 will be members of minority groups. These students are much more likely than white students to be from poor families with limited education.
2. In 1986, the nation's Blacks and Hispanics had incomes below the poverty level nearly three times the rate for whites.
3. In the same year, Blacks were twice as likely to be unemployed than were whites.
4. Members of minority groups were less likely than whites to have a college education--20.1% of whites over age 25 had completed at least four years of college compared to 10.9% for Blacks and 8.4% for Hispanics in 1986.

Excellence in education requires that majority and minority students be exposed to a variety of cultures, but an alarming decline in the number of minority teachers continues (Behymer, 1990, p. 374). Attracting minority students with the characteristics identified with effective teachers into teacher education programs is a multifaceted task requiring cooperation among all segments of society. However, regardless of the various programs and special efforts on the part of educators, the current bottom line to attracting high-ability minority students still appears to be money.

An interesting phenomenon in financial aid for college students has been the remarkable growth in state supported no-need scholarships (Reeher & Davis, 1989, p. 8). In fact, of the 29 states that award aid to undergraduates without consideration of financial need, 22 began in the 1980's and 14 made

their first awards after the 1983-1984 academic year (Reeher & Davis, 1989, p. 7). The establishment of funds for the preparation of prospective teachers was a part of this trend. In 1986-1987 alone, eight state programs for prospective teachers were initiated (Reeher & Davis, 1987, p. 2).

**Teacher Education Scholarships**

Recent studies support the use of scholarships to affect career choice. A stratified-random sample of high school juniors and seniors in Missouri were surveyed regarding the importance of scholarships to attract students into a teaching career. Over 61% of the respondents indicated that scholarships were "very important" in selecting a teaching career, with 32% indicating that it was "somewhat important" (Behymer & Cockriel, 1986, p. 5).

Research, reported at the annual meeting of the Association of Teacher Education (ATE) in 1990, indicates that high school students from Michigan also report that a scholarship would effect their decision regarding teaching as a career (Mack & Jackson, 1990). Mack and Jackson found that 37.2% of the total sample were willing to become teachers if given a scholarship. They conclude, "These figures may suggest that there exists a number of minority students who are willing to become a teacher, if they are provided financial support or incentives" (p. 29).

The national trend in growth of no-need scholarships is reflected in Missouri. The Missouri General Assembly passed House Bill 463, the Excellence in Education Act of 1985, with a provision for the Missouri Teacher Education Scholarship (MTES) program. This program included 210 one-year, merit-based awards for prospective teachers, $1,000 provided by the state and $1,000 by participating institutions. After the first two years of this program, the number of annual awards was increased to 260.

**Minority Teacher Education Scholarships**

A survey, which addressed the recruitment of minority teacher education students with academic scholarships, of 58 American Association of Colleges

for Teacher Education (AACTE) institutions was reported at the 1989 Annual AACTE meeting (George and Blank, 1989). The survey results indicate that 83% of the units with scholarships had an increase in the enrollment of minority students.

Only one Black recipient in the first two years of the Missouri Teacher Education Scholarship program was selected (Baigi, 1988, p. 204). What were the reasons for this low response from Missouri's talented Black students? The answer would appear to be financial. In her study, Baigi (p. 203) surveyed institutional contact persons for the Missouri Teacher Education Scholarships and discovered that the $2,000 nonrenewable award was not sufficient to attract academically talented and especially low income students into teacher education programs.

However, no-need scholarships that are "full ride" appear to attract talented Black minority students. College recruiters readily acknowledge this fact that can be documented by studying specific college aid programs. One such program is the University of Missouri-Columbia's George Brooks Minority Scholarships. The Brooks Scholarships are basically "full-ride" scholarships for talented minority students that began in 1987-1988. All of the Brooks Scholarships available are awarded each year (Robertson, 1990). The message seems clear; full-cost scholarships will attract bright minority students, including Black high school students. Criteria for these scholarships include class ranking in the top 10 percent and a high ACT or SAT score.

Missouri legislators heard this message clearly and passed House Bill 1142 in 1990 that provides $2,000 for 100 minority students who make a commitment to pursue a teaching career. Missouri institutions participating in the program must provide an additional $1,000. The $3,000 scholarship is renewable for four years.

**EDUCARE Program**

Another example of a Missouri effort to attract minorities into teacher education programs is the EDUCARE program. EDUCARE resulted from recommendations of the Missouri Association of Colleges for Teacher Education Minority Recruitment Task Force (Behymer, 1990) and was initiated with University of Missouri-Columbia College of Education funds and a grant from the United States Department of Education. It is a six-week summer experience for minority students who have expressed interest in graduate study and a career as a professional educator. EDUCARE's objectives are to provide selected minority students with an opportunity to participate in research and scholarly activities, introduce students to opportunities for graduate study, acquaint students with procedures for applying and securing financial aid for graduate study, and aid planning for a career in professional education. EDUCARE provides a financial stipend of $3,000 to cover costs of tuition, housing, transportation, and to help offset the six-week loss of income.

EDUCARE participants must be American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, Black (non-Hispanic), or Hispanic. They must have completed 90 semester hours by June of the preceding year for which applying, earned a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.75 on a 4.0 scale, and expressed an interest in pursuing graduate studies in a teacher education program.

Faculty and staff mentoring is the heart of the EDUCARE program. Each student is assigned to a faculty mentor with similar research interests. The mentor is selected carefully based on commitment to the program and to previous effectiveness in interacting with minority students. The curriculum includes a basic research and statistics course that gives participants enough background to work closely with the faculty mentor on an ongoing research

project. In addition to the research experience, mentors also provide support that helps the students adapt to the University academic, social, and cultural environment.

In addition, EDUCARE staff contribute significantly to the sense of family expressed repeatedly by participants. Staff not only provide instruction but also facilitate interaction through social, cultural, and recreational activities. For example, staff members have invited students to social events in their homes, joined in recreational and cultural activities, and encouraged exploration of the campus, community, and state.

In addition to the research and statistics course, the curriculum includes word processing, electronic mail, and computer applications. Students also develop library research skills including computer searches. The culminating activity is for each student to give a 15-minute presentation based on their research at a education miniconference. This project combines the competencies students have developed through their basic research and statistics course, computer experiences, library research skills, and the research projects. College of Education deans, selected faculty, staff, and students; mentors; and staff from the Graduate School and Provost's office comprise an interested and enthusiastic audience for the miniconference.

Students are recruited into the EDUCARE program with the assistance of Missouri Association of Colleges for Teacher Education institutional representatives. These representatives identify, encourage students to apply, and submit recommendations for qualified students in their teacher education programs.

Based on the success of the program, several of the representatives have stated that where these students eventually attend graduate school is less important than increasing the number of talented students who enter the teaching profession and prepare to assume leadership roles. Experience suggests that this type of collaboration among institutions offering teacher

education programs is important to recruiting and retaining potential minority teachers. Some representatives have expressed a desire to collaborate to an even greater extent.

The snowball effect of the EDUCARE program shows promise for recruiting high-ability minority students into teacher education programs. For example, one participant returned to her institution to complete her senior year and was asked to appear on the program for the new student orientation to discuss EDUCARE and the need for minority teachers. She was subsequently asked to make a presentation at a faculty meeting in that institution. Based on his EDUCARE experiences, another student talks to young Black students with whom he works through community volunteer programs and church youth programs about the possibility of becoming a teacher. He serves as an excellent role model for these young people, and his enthusiasm developed through EDUCARE for teaching as a career option may pay recruitment dividends.

Two of the EDUCARE participants who graduated in May enrolled in Graduate School at the University of Missouri-Columbia and qualified for fellowships that provide a stipend of $12,000, which includes a quarter-time assistantship. These students volunteered to participate in a community-based tutoring program for Black students who are at risk and have chosen to seek help. They provide the teaching role model that is necessary to stimulate some of these younger students to consider teaching as a career.

Results of the survey obtained during the EDUCARE fall assessment and renewal seminar show that the six-week summer experience made a difference in students' interest and commitment to pursue graduate studies to prepare for a career in education. Of the eleven 1990 participants who graduated in May, two enrolled in graduate teacher education programs at the University of Missouri-Columbia and two at other Missouri institutions. Another May graduate accepted a full-time teaching position and plans to begin a graduate program this semester. The other 1990 participants needed one more year to

complete their baccalaureate degrees, but all indicated on the confidential survey an intent to pursue graduate studies in teacher education.

The positive publicity resulting from the EDUCARE program should also help attract minority students into teacher education programs. EDUCARE received its share of local and state media coverage. In addition, word-of-mouth communication is perhaps even more important among minority groups in contrast to the majority regarding campus environment--cultural, social, and academic--and maybe choice of major. If minority students who are academically superior and leaders at their institutions indicate that they are going to be teachers, other students are more likely to follow their lead.

**Minority Intern Program**

In addition to collaborating with other Missouri institutions who offer teacher education programs, the University of Missouri-Columbia also collaborates with elementary and secondary schools. One collaborative effort is the Columbia Public Schools Minority Intern Program. The district's goals for this program are to encourage qualified students to consider a career in education and eventually commit to teaching in the Columbia Public Schools. The program, through a combined effort of the school district and the three higher education institutions in Columbia, has four major objectives for the college students: to foster and maintain the interests of minority students in a teaching career, to provide relevant classroom experience prior to student teaching, to expose minority students to a quality education experience, and to enhance minority participation at the professional level. For the Columbia Public Schools, the intern program will help develop a professional staff that reflects the racial diversity of the community and attract and obtain high-quality teachers and administrators.

The Minority Intern Program provides college students with opportunities to observe and work with professional educators in and out of the classroom. Interns work with the teachers, educational specialists, and administrators.

They observe and practice student management strategies, interpersonal relationship skills, student assessment techniques, and effective teaching strategies. In addition, interns may work with parents and the schools' business partnership program.

Minority interns must be a member of a racial minority, be a sophomore, junior, or senior enrolled in 12 hours or more at one of Columbia's three higher education institutions, maintain a GPA of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale, and demonstrate the interpersonal skills to work with people. Interns selected for the program serve in assigned buildings for a minimum of 15 hours per week. Internships are for one semester with opportunity for renewal, and a $1,500 stipend is paid for each full semester the intern is enrolled in the program.

To attract more participants into the intern program, the College of Education communicated with participants in the University's Minority Achievement Program (MAP). MAP is designed for academically talented minority students and seeks to stimulate the intellectual, cultural, and social growth of students and aid them in understanding their post-baccalaureate options. Several MAP participants chose to take advantage of the Columbia Public School Minority Intern Program, most of whom are pursuing baccalaureate degrees in areas other than education. Those who show promise of becoming effective teachers are recommended to the College of Education for follow-up contacts. In addition to encouragement by district personnel to consider teaching as a career option, an assistant dean and several carefully selected minority students make personal contacts with the interns to discuss the possibility of them entering a teacher education program. Students are told about certification requirements, services available, financial aid opportunities, the mentoring program, and placement statistics.

Plans are being made for the Columbia Public Schools, the University, and the College of Education to collaborate further in attracting minorities

into teacher education programs. Junior high school principals will recommend ninth grade students whom they believe have the academic ability and personal characteristics associated with effective teachers for a summer internship program. These students will be paid teacher aides to work with children in summer school programs. In addition, participants in the College's EDUCARE program will work with these young interns to share experiences and to encourage them to pursue a career in education. After students complete the summer internship, they will be invited to join a mentoring program that includes a former EDUCARE participant enrolled in a graduate program at the University, personnel from the College of Education, and personnel from the Columbia Public Schools.

Certainly the continuation of the quality of living that we currently enjoy -indeed the very future of society--will be endangered if we do not increase the number of minority teachers to serve as role models for minority and majority children as well as adults. We need collaborative efforts among higher education institutions, elementary and secondary schools, business and industry, state and federal agencies, and the community to accomplish this goal. We must begin with young children, perhaps as young as third grade, to give them the academic background to enter college and just as importantly to give them the expectation that they can attend college and can become a teacher.

However, this goal cannot be accomplished without money. To recruit high-ability minority students with the kind of interpersonal skills identified with effective teachers, institutions must be able to offer renewable scholarships or assistantships. The competition is not only with other teacher education programs but is even more so with careers other than education. Competition from business and industry and the military for these talented young people is keen. Renewable scholarship and assistantship funding is certainly not all that is needed to attract more minorities into

teacher education programs, but it is a necessity. Our future as a society rests on our success in this recruitment and retention effort.

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